

FOCUS: Downtown

Strategies for the Year:

Aggressively manage downtown's redevelopment through partnering efforts with public and private organizations and individuals active in downtown.

Provide a highly "amenitized" urban center focused on the proposed entertainment experience area on Congress Street from Church Avenue to 4th Avenue, linked with the Tucson Convention Center and its adjoining proposed new Civic Plaza.

Encourage private leadership and investment in downtown through targeted public investment.

Project

Rio Nuevo

- Development Effort - Sale of Public Land for Private Residential Development

Description

This 13-acre parcel on West Congress has been offered to the private sector for the development of housing units in a unique setting that will link commercial, cultural and recreational activities with a variety of new housing styles and types.

Accomplishments

Met with Rio Nuevo Citizens Advisory Committee, Rio Nuevo Board, Menlo Park Neighborhood, Mayor and Council Rio Nuevo and Downtown Subcommittee and Mayor and Council on Residential RFP, gained their approval to issue RFP. RFP issued and advertised in June, amended final plat approved in June. Five proposals have been received and a recommendation for award will go to Mayor and Council during mid October.



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Project

Rio Nuevo

• New Tucson Convention Center Ticket Office

Description

Construct state-of-the-art ticket office on the east side of the Convention Center. Improving visibility makes it easier for customers to locate, and its design compliments the other improvements taking place on the west side of downtown.

Accomplishments

Grand opening in May 2003. This is the first construction project of the Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District and creates a new "front door" to the Convention Center. It features 10 handicap-accessible windows, a video screen to display and promote upcoming events, and an electronic message center to welcome event attendees.



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Adoption/Implementation of Tucson (New Jersey) Rehabilitation Code

Description

The Tucson Rehabilitation Code provides a fresh approach to the rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Many existing buildings in our City were built to comply with an earlier building code, yet are often still safe and sound.

Before adoption of the Tucson Rehabilitation Code rehabilitation projects were required to bring buildings into compliance with portions of the current building codes for new construction. For older buildings, predicting what it would take to bring the building up to current codes was difficult and could discourage rehabilitation.

The Tucson Rehabilitation Code addresses this problem by, to the greatest extent possible, letting the applicant choose the scope of the project, and by establishing specific requirements that make sense in existing buildings.

Accomplishments

The Development Services Department implemented the Tucson Rehabilitation Code with the participation and assistance of many groups including: American Institute of Architects, Building Owners and Managers Association, Alliance for Construction Trades, Arizona Builders Alliance, and the Mayor and Council Downtown/Rio Nuevo subcommittee.



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Project

Implementation of Financial Incentive Strategies in Downtown

Description

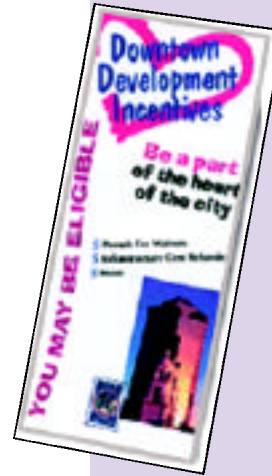
Financial incentives for developers of core area properties to stimulate new investment. Also provision of special loan program for downtown neighborhoods to encourage reinvestment in existing housing stock.

Accomplishments

Financial incentive package approved by the Mayor and Council and implemented in Fall of 2002.

Mayor and Council approved owner-occupied tax relief program, funded through land sales.

Zero interest home loan program initiated in spring of 2003 for downtown neighborhoods. Development Services fee waivers are available for any residential or commercial project in downtown core. Rebates are available on city sales tax on downtown core area construction for use to fund infrastructure improvements.



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Project

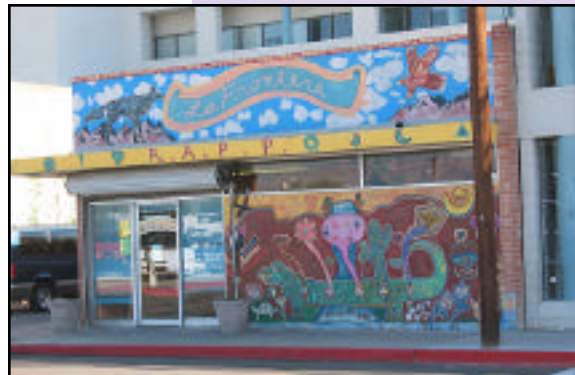
Warehouse District ADOT Asset Acquisition and Management

Description

Obtain from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) their assets owned in the warehouse district of Tucson at nominal cost. Create and implement a management program for the assets that ensures viability of the Barraza-Aviation parkway construction, protects historic assets where possible, and continues artist-based presence in District.

Accomplishments

Interview of tenants completed. Obtain ownership rights from ADOT; negotiations proceeding. Implement management program - documents under review from Chapman/Lindsey.



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• Tucson Origins Cultural Park

Description

This is one of the cornerstone elements of the Rio Nuevo project. Tucson Origins will celebrate 11,000 years of Tucson history with attractions on both sides of the Santa Cruz River. On the west will be a reconstruction of the Mission San Agustín complex from the late 1700's, development of Mission Gardens, re-creation of a Piman village, a new interpretive center and open space. The intention is to create a very special "sense of place" on this side of the river. On the east, in the heart of downtown, the Tucson Presidio will be interpreted at Church and Washington Streets. The two project elements will be linked through interpretive and physical linkages across the river and interstate.

Accomplishments

- Archaeological investigations were completed on the Presidio site at Church and Washington Streets and stabilization of historic buildings located at 196 N. Court Ave. has begun.
- A consultant team headed by the WLB Group was hired in early 2003 to complete an interpretive plan for the Tucson Origins project. The team has completed their preliminary work which included interviews with stakeholders and other interested groups and individuals, and has prepared initial interpretive concepts for the project.
- A public meeting was held in May to obtain input and another is planned for October when the interpretive concepts will be presented for public review and comment.
- The consultants will have their work completed by the end of 2003.



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Project

Rio Nuevo
• Fox Theatre

Description

Restoration of the Historic Fox Theatre on Congress St.

Accomplishments

Restoration of the Fox Theatre is underway. Mayor and Council and District Board approved development and lease agreement in December of 2002. Star Building grand opening occurred on July 17, 2003. Acquisition of 27 West Congress occurred in June of 2003. Sign and marquee project completed. Major interior restoration of facility underway, on schedule, within budget. The Fox marquee is lit up for special events and the theater will hold its grand opening in 2004.



Provide a highly "amenitized" urban center ...

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Project

Rio Nuevo

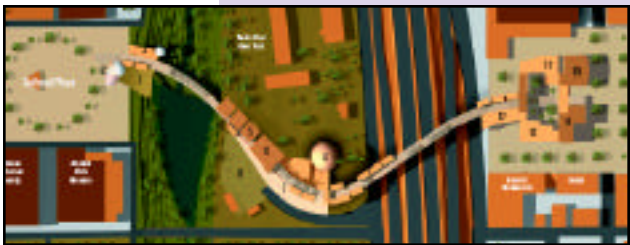
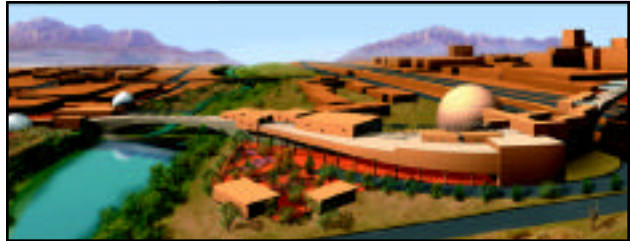
- Civic Plaza Attractions
- UA Science Center

Description

Develop area in proximity to Tucson Convention Center as an integrated attraction-based collection of projects.

Accomplishments

Reviewed Aquarium proposals and rejected them as financially risky. In July, 2003, delivered feasibility study for U of A Science Center, completed by Ralph Applebaum & Assoc and ConsultEcon. This followed well-attended Community Conference held in May, 2003. Feasibility study indicates project should proceed to next step, if approved by District Board, Board of Regents and Mayor and Council. In early September, 150 citizens attended a Town Hall meeting with the majority in support of the project. The University is engaged in a significant outreach program to inform the community. Secured availability of additional state funding for future Convention Center facility improvements.



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Rio Nuevo

Historic Downtown Train Depot

Description

The Depot is part of multi-phased project that includes facilities for transportation and private sector elements in the eastern end of the downtown area. Passenger trains, inter-city bus service, intra-city bus service, historic trolley, bicycle, pedestrian, shuttle services, rental cars, and parking facilities will all be accommodated. The project also includes retail, restaurant, office space, parking and a transportation museum. The project is scheduled in phases, with completion of the depot's main building in the fall of 2003.

Accomplishments

Lloyd Construction is the selected general contractor to complete Depot complex. Buzz Isaacson has been selected as the broker for leasing of the private sector areas of the project. Construction slated for completion this winter, community "sneak peek" scheduled for October, 2003. Additional funding secured from Federal Transit Administration.



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City Hall Annex Site (Parking Garage)

Description

The City Hall Annex, formerly the Levy's Department Store, will be demolished and redeveloped as a parking garage with first-floor retail.

Accomplishments

Lease agreement nearly complete. Design-build initial specifications contract issued and design-build firms have been shortlisted to three. Specifications underway by Walker Parking. Asbestos abatement nearly completed and demolition scheduled to be completed by year-end. Site tests for soil contamination and ground compaction were completed. Asbestos abatement is expected to be completed in September. Demolition is scheduled for October. Construction on the 560-space parking garage is scheduled to begin in February 2004.



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Depot Plaza Mixed-Use Development

Description

Located across Toole Avenue from the Historic Train Depot, this 2.3-acre site is planned for mixed-use redevelopment with market and affordable housing and commercial space. The planned housing, restaurant, office, retail and museum space will center on a public plaza creating a whole new district in east Downtown.

Accomplishments

Developer partner selected in summer 2003. Environmental reviews initiated. Market study completed, and architect selected. Assembling financing package including preparation of a HUD HOPE VI application, Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District contribution, and preliminary tax exempt bond proposal.



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